

# LIMERICK SOCIALIST

MARCH 1981

15p

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 3

THE  
VOICE  
OF THE  
WORKER

'That which is good for the working class I esteem patriotic ...' *James Connolly*



## PAISLEY'S PUSH



# SEAN SOUTH COMMÉMORATION

## PART THREE

It can hardly be said that the views of Sean South held in 1949 and in the following years were merely passing flirtations. He retained his membership of the Legion of Mary until 1953. Between August, 1954 and January 1956, he contributed a series of articles on monetary matters to a bi-lingual paper 'Rosc', published by the Gaelic League in Limerick, in which he referred with approval to another one of Fr. Fahey's books, 'Money Manipulation and the Social Order'.

Such was the religious and intellectual climate in which Sean South moved and in which he cut his political teeth and shaped his ideology.

Having served a political apprenticeship of this nature, it was a logical progression for South's restless spirit to continue its search for an even more determined and disciplined organisation. His political odyssey ended when he joined the IRA, in 1955.

It is significant that the IRA attacks on the North coincided with the lowest point of economic depression in the South. In the year of Sean South's death, 94,000 people were unemployed and over 60,000 left the country. At a time of economic crisis, anti-Partitionism provided the Southern Government with a ready-made bromide, which was, and still is, capable of blunting the capital/labour conflict and of creating an all-embracing sense of fellow-feeling. It proved an effective device for channelling potential working class agitation and development into sterile nationalist activity.

Though there was a great deal of public repudiation of the IRA campaign by the Fianna Fail Government, the ground for the attacks had been carefully prepared almost a decade before. IN 1948, all the political parties had embarked on a united and intensive anti-Partition drive. Emotional feelings ran high and were kept at boiling point until they reached their natural outlet in the 1956 Border Campaign. The military campaign itself was a failure, but it had helped to provide a safety valve for the Southern Government's economic problems and had also played its part in frustrating the development of a working class consciousness. The IRA itself came to recognise the futility of this kind of attack, after the campaign finally petered out in 1962, and in its booklet, "The IRA Speaks", makes this clear: 'As soon as the campaign ended the questioning, examination and assessment began. It was not confined to the 1956 campaign, but covered the role of the Republican Movement after 1916. One thing was evident. The Irish Republican Army had become remote from the people ... It was agreed that the major miscalculations of the past were political rather than military ... The Army had no solid political base amongst the people. It had no clear-cut ideology, which could define to the people what the struggle was all about'.

In this book, 'The IRA', Tim Pat Coogan states that 'South showed himself in his few writings to be a staunch though not uncritical Catholic and possessed of a social conscience.' One of the documented accounts of South's social conscience is to be found in an article in 'An Dord' in which he criticises the landed gentry and their lavish hunt balls. He wrote: 'We have the names of people involved in this frivolity and ... the majority of them were English. They came here after the War and took possession of the fertile lands of this country. Remember the amount of blood that was spilt thirty years ago to destroy these. The squires are settled in our midst again with a firm grip on the territory of Ireland and our own people are emigrating because of want and hunger'. It is clear that most of South's antagonism towards the 'gentry' was directed against their English origins and was not rooted in any class basis.

A perceptive analysis of some of South's ideas was contained in a book review of his biography by John Jordan in 'Hibernia', July-August, 1964. The review stated: 'I intend no disrespect to the memory of South, when I say that it is also a hagiography, designed to appeal to certain quarters with fixed ideas as to what constitutes the best kind of Irish Catholic Republican ... This book is important because the blue-print for a certain kind of image is almost too perfect - the 27-year-old Republican was, perhaps unwittingly lending himself to witch-hunting, a fact no less shocking than that the disciple of Tone and Pearse should have been associated with attacks on Article 44.

'But I think I have said enough to indicate the way Sean was going, the way he had to go, given his premises of an Ireland united, Gaelic and Catholic, and the interpretations he put on these terms. The fact that he could have acted on his convictions as recently as 1957 is what makes his case so curious as in the image projected by Mr. Seoighe: devout Catholic, fanatic Gaelic anti-foreigner, (foreigners are English, Masonic, Jewish, Communist) and yet professed heir to Tone, an eighteenth century deist with more than a touch of anti-clericalism in him, of Pearse, a man of liberal culture ... and of James Connolly, whose 'Labour in Irish History', is unquestionably, a Socialist document.

This handsomely-produced book is not only a tribute to South but a document on the nature of Irish schizophrenia. And that lonely death on January 1st, 1957, is an indictment of our national vice of double-think. The sacrifice should not have been in vain'.

From a study of Sean South's political development and his writings, he appears to have considered himself an apostle of Pearse and to have moulded himself on the character and image of Pearse. Though he was one of the most literate and articulate Republicans in Limerick, he had a simplistic attitude to the country's problems, probably best summed-up in the words of the ballad ... written about the making of his Republican comrade, Fergal O'Hanlon, who was killed on the same raid as South '... I was taught all my life cruel England to blame ... and so I'm part of the patriot game.'

On the 9th December 1956 Sean South left Limerick on his journey north to take part in the I.R.A.'s military campaign in Northern Ireland. He carried a bottle of Lourdes water in his pocket. As early as the 6th July 1948 he had written a letter to the editor of the **United Irishman** in which he stated: "I believe with Tone and the others that England is the cause of every evil in Ireland". From that date to his death on New Year's Day, 1957, South had written and spoken incessantly on this theme. He was a man of his word and now the time for action had arrived.

On New Year's Day, 1957, Sean South died from gunshot wounds received in an IRA raid on Brookeborough Barracks, in the first year of the IRA's Border Campaign. On the long route to Limerick his body was taken through Dundalk, Drogheda and Dublin. Everywhere people gathered in silent sympathy and when the cortege reached Limerick, there was an estimated crowd of 200,000 waiting patiently in the rain to pay homage. Republican supporters had gathered from near and far and the funeral, the largest in Limerick in living memory, marked the highest expression of anti-Partition feeling in the fifties.

The I.R.A. raid in which South was killed is described in two books, **The Secret Army**, by J. Bowyer Bell, and **The I.R.A.**, by Tim Pat Coogan. Coogan states:

**In a sense the Brookeborough ambush explains everything about the I.R.A. and its hold on Irish tradition.**

It shows all the courage, the self-sacrifice, the blundering and the emotional appeal that have characterised and kept alive the I.R.A. spirit for centuries. The two young men who lost their lives in the Brookeborough affair, Fergal O'Hanlon and Sean South were given two of the biggest funerals in living memory - but during their lives there was never sufficient public support for their aims for them to receive proper military instruction or even to be correctly briefed on the target that claimed their lives

...

Bowyer Bell wrote:

The assault section piled out and ran toward the barracks with the mine. Inside Sergeant Kenneth Cordner was about to open the door into the street ... In the truck Sean South was firing the Bren with Paddy O'Regan feeding him with the magazines ... South could not get sufficient elevation to reach the second floor. Then the juice was turned on to detonate the mine. Nothing happened. With both the cover party, and the assault party firing at the barracks, another mine was placed. The cable was straightened and the wires tipped. Nothing happened. Dave O'Connell, 2nd C/O fired his Thompson into the two mines. Nothing happened. By this time Cordner had reached the front room upstairs ... He squeezed off a full twenty-five rounds in one long burst.

According to Coogan,

'South was hit first: like the others in the truck he was a sitting target from the upper windows of the barracks. One of the attackers threw a grenade at the barracks, but it bounced off a window-sill and fell under the truck. Just as this happened a burst of Bren-fire wounded Phil O'Donaghue, Sean Garland and Fergal O'Hanlon. Then the grenade went off and O'Donaghue was blown off the truck; as he hit the road he was struck by three bullets...

Bowyer Bell continues:

The back of the truck was a butcher shop. Sean Sean was sprawled over the Bren-gun unconscious... Even in the shambles in the rear of the truck, there was no doubt

that South was finished. O'Hanlon was almost gone ... The Brookeborough raid became a legend overnight. Sean South and Fergal O'Hanlon martyrs within a week. The military shambles of January 1 was to be the source of a hundred ballads sung through the years.

Bowyer Bell accurately concludes:

Most Irishmen, including many who followed Sean South's casket, thought the campaign madness and the I.R.A. irresponsible. Without public opinion or political leverage, the I.R.A. had only the gun.

South gave his life in an attempt to give effect to his belief in a 32 County Catholic Nationalist Ireland. That a million Northern Protestants might have views to the contrary never seems to have shaken his single-minded attitude.

It is futile to speculate on how South would have developed had he lived to see the ecumenical sixties. But it is certain that the mental image of his austere, bespectacled, straight-backed and trench-coated figure will continue to haunt the minds of many people, as a constant and grim reminder of 'the almost too perfect model' of hot-house Catholicism and perverted nationalism of the period.

Sean South's dedication and bravery are beyond doubt and he did his duty, as he saw it, according to his lights. But the benefits of hindsight, the liberalising effects of free trade economics and the improved educational and communications facilities now available provide a different and wider backdrop against which South and his ideas may be examined. His lights were generated by 'the fixed ideas' as to what constitutes the best kind of Irish Catholic Republican of the 1950s, Cold War variety. These lights effected his political vision on some fronts; led him into blind alleys on others and finally impelled him to willingly sacrifice his life for his sincerely held beliefs.

Sean South gave his life and his effort to extend the rule of Catholic Nationalism over the whole island. All other similar attempts to bring about a "United" Ireland through the subjugation of the Northern Protestants can only sharpen the existing deep divisions and further delay the real unity of people in the two communities.

# POEMS by Sean Healy

## A HUMANIST'S PRAYER

I want to live,  
to see the flowers' opening lips  
drink in the Summer rain,  
and not the frightened eyes of war-scared orphans  
crazed with pain.

To see the golden moon  
rise up above the distant hill,  
a lover's moon, and not a bomber's  
out to kill.

To hope that man shall follow man  
as has happened since the race began,  
and that the line continues endless  
'til the end of time.

No God, or gods I ask for help,  
let men appeal to men,  
'give us this day our daily bread, not bombs',  
Amen . . . Amen.

## LAND OF THE SAVAGE

Land of toil and the slave's bent back,  
heat that burns all humans black;  
land of desert and scorching sun,  
land of the whiplash and the gun;  
land of murder, land of rape,  
tortured from the Transvaal to the Cape;

where the poor and barefoot are trampled on,  
and the black mother weeps for her murdered son;  
land of the white man with his christian creed  
blessing his murders and his greed,  
his fascist politics of the devil's choice,  
'every man has got his price';  
land of brutes that ramp and ravage,  
land of apartheid, and the white savage.

## PAGAN FLAMES

Sometimes my angry thoughts rest,  
and then I dream,  
remembering the legendary Leprechaun,  
seen by drunken liars by some mountain stream.  
Oh, what a host of pagan fetishes still live  
by cairn and mountain lake,  
by holy wells like Glashachoorra,  
and serving drinks at a poor man's wake;  
for our ancient gods were always with us  
although baptised with Christian names,  
and the warm hearts that glow within us  
are lit by pagan flames.  
To the Christian man whose blood runs thin,  
I've this to say,  
our ancient ways were a healthy sin,  
and the dogmas of the men of Rome  
only confused our Celtic home.

DR. LONG WRITES HIS OWN HISTORY of the LIMERICK MEDICAL MISSION

# THE DR. LONG STORY

PART TWENTY  
THE YEAR 1902

## A ROMISH PRIEST'S IDEA OF KEEPING HIS WORD

**THE Christmas season of 1901 gave birth to a better and happier spirit in Limerick, and as the year 1902 dawned we began to realise that the storms were over and that the dark clouds which had threatened the Mission were passing away and giving place to bright gleams of sunshine.**

Our position was a difficult one, for the Mission had been cursed, and all who were connected with it had been held up to public contempt as characters of the worst type, and as agents of the devil. To attend the Mission was the same as to go to hell itself, for all who went there would be damned, and it was a mortal sin from which no priest, but the Bishop alone, could absolve the soul. This was the teaching of the "one true Church", yet there were many professing members of this "one true Church" who did not believe her teaching in this matter. Numbers of patients were terrified and feared to come again, so that our attendances were greatly reduced.

We had the task before us of slowly working forward day after day, seeking to live down the prejudice which had been aroused, and to win back those who through fear had been driven away.

There were many Roman Catholic priests who were in sympathy with us - those who had been to the Mission and knew for themselves that things were entirely different from what the priests would have them believe. They heard of a God who loved them, and of a Saviour who died for them, and they said it was all good, and they asked: How could a place where they heard such words be "hell"?

As the mobbings had ceased, and all was apparently quiet, the Government, to my great relief, removed my police guard early in January. It was a pleasant thing to get about in an ordinary way again. Perhaps I did not fully appreciate the honour of being provided with a bodyguard of such fine fellows as the R.I.C. I shall always feel grateful to those who were exposed to danger in their efforts to secure my safety, and shall ever remember with pleasure the courteous manner in which they fulfilled their duty.

The work at the dispensary went on quietly day after day, but we were aware that the priests were making every effort to restrict the influence of the Mission, and, since they believed this influence to be Satanic, one could not blame them for all they tried to do. The order that "Dr. Long should not be allowed into any Catholic house" was rigidly enforced. This quiet state of things continued until February 20th, when an unfortunate incident occurred which resulted in my being again placed under police protection, but not so closely as before.

It happened, as I was returning to the city with two of my little girls in the afternoon, that we were recognised by some boys and girls who were playing in the street. For their amusement, they commenced to shout "Dr. Long," and to follow us singing, "We'll hang Dr. Long on a sour apple tree", and "Dr. Long's ould mother keeps a soup shop in hell".

A crowd quickly collected from all sides, while we tried to appear amused; but as we passed St. Mary's R.C. Chapel a priest, standing near the gate, looked anything but displeased at what was taking place. Stones and mud were now thrown from behind, and we were hit several times, so we stood at bay facing a rough and jeering crowd. At this moment two priests came out of the Chapel. I went towards them, and the crowd waited to see what would happen. I asked them for their protection from the violence of their people. One of them replied: "Those are not my people". The other said: "I know who you are; we will have nothing to do with you". They then turned down a side lane away from the crowd. A number of the young rowdies seemed bent on mischief, and were encouraged by seeing the way in which we had been treated by the priests,

so they commenced to throw mud again. There seemed no way of escape from them, so quickly taking my two little girls one by each hand, I followed closely on the priests' heels; they tried to avoid us, but we were able to keep up with them, and thus secured a measure of protection.

The crowd came rushing, shouting, hooting up the lane behind us; some stones were thrown, and one of the priests was struck on the leg. On reaching the end of the lane this priest said: "If you will go on now we will keep the crowd back". I took him at his word and we started across an open space towards home. The priests immediately turned away, having in this way shaken us off, and we were left at the mercy of the mob!

The crowd came on with a wild howl and a shower of stones; we were all hit, one of the little girls being struck on the ankle, and unable to walk; the other was struck on the neck, which commenced to bleed, and both clung to me crying with fear and pain.

We were immediately surrounded by a hissing, howling mob, using language which was only fit for devils - poor creatures, one could only pity them. I had never injured one of them, but their minds had been poisoned - they were not to be blamed, and God's grace restrained me from hurting any of them.

Seeing the children were hurt and crying, those near became sobered. I spoke quietly to them for throwing stones at me when I had the children with me. I said I was sure they did not mean to hurt them, and they should wait until I was by myself. All the shouting soon stopped, and some more responsible people came round offering us protection and help.

We went home surrounded by a large bodyguard of Roman Catholics, many expressing regret at what had happened. The little girls soon recovered, and never since have we been annoyed in that district. It all occurred in a very few minutes, and we had no policeman with us.

During the spring of this year I was invited to speak about the work in Limerick at the Annual Meetings of our Society, and was in Liverpool on March 17th, in Dublin on April 8th, and in London on May 13th.

In every place I met with a very warm welcome from friends, who assured me that they had continually remembered me in prayer during the stormy period. It was a revelation to me to meet so many in England who were working and praying for Ireland. Personally, I can never measure nor repay my indebtedness to them for their prayerful sympathy and support.

On April 1st at the Limerick Quarter Sessions, before his Honour Judge Adams (a Roman Catholic), an adjourned appeal case was heard, in which Edward Fleming, a bill-poster, was the defendant. He had been convicted by the magistrates and sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment for committing an assault on Constable Gargan, on the day the hostile crowd was following me after leaving the Court House when the case against "Father" O'Leary was dismissed. He had leaped at my throat, and seizing my collar had tried to butt my chest and pull me to the ground. The constable caught him, and in his efforts to make him release his grip on my coat, he got his thumb severely bitten by the bill-poster.

The Judge asked: "What is the existing state of affairs with reference to Dr. Long, and is he still in Limerick?" The Head Constable replied: "He is, your Honour, but matters are quite peaceable". The Judge then said: "This old man appears to have got excited on the occasion," and added that "he was glad to hear that things had assumed their normal quietness, and it appeared to him that the Limerick people did get flashes of common sense. He was always of the opinion that the Limerick people made the greatest mistake they could make in interfering with this gentleman. In the present case he would reverse the

conviction".

On May 5th, 1902, "Father" Tierney left Limerick, his term of office as spiritual director of the "Arch-Confraternity of the Holy Family" having come to an end, and his departure was made the occasion of a great popular ovation by his admirers. There was no question of his popularity amongst the great mass of the ignorant people, by whom he was regarded as a most zealous priest and a champion of the Church, but there were many also, perhaps many more than would dare to confess it, who did not regret that he was leaving Limerick. Personally, it was a relief to me, and for Limerick's sake I was glad. I never entertained any feelings of animosity towards him. I believe he was sincere and conscientious in what he did, believing he was doing it all for God and his Church. We pitied him and prayed for him, and we praised God for removing him and for sparing us to continue the work in Limerick.

The remainder of the year was spent in holding on and working quietly at the dispensary, and there was some improvement in the numbers who ventured to attend the Mission. Some stones were thrown through the surgery windows in November; otherwise the year passed quietly.

### ENCOURAGEMENTS AND DISCOURAGEMENTS

DURING the following year the numbers attending the dispensary slowly but steadily continued to increase. The work in the Mission was always full of interest. On days when the attendance was small we had more time to devote to each patient, and to enter into conversation with those who were interested in the great Message we sought to proclaim.

We heard many stories from poor people of how pressure, through threats and annoyance, was brought to bear on them to cease attending.

It was interesting to hear from one and another the different excuses by which they tried to justify themselves for attending the Dispensary. Some said that "they had tried all the doctors in the city, and had found no relief until they went to Dr. Long, and he cured them." Others would argue: "If he is the devil, and will do me good, why should I not go to the devil himself?" Another would say: "I see no sin in coming here; I hear nothing wrong said, and see no wrong done, but I see good done, and hear good words." Some devout Romanists, when asked what they would say when they went to confession next (as the Bishop had made it a mortal sin to attend the Mission), replied, they "did not believe it a mortal sin, and would not feel bound to confess it at all".

Though many had sufficient courage to come away from their own districts and quietly visit the dispensary, trusting that no busy spy would see them, it was too much to expect them, when sick, to send for me, as they would at once be marked out for annoyance by their more bigoted neighbours. My visits, therefore, to Roman Catholics were very few indeed at this time. I never visited a house unless definitely invited as a doctor to attend some patient. But when a call came, I felt it my duty to go, regardless of consequences.

One evening early in February, 1903, I received a call from a Protestant woman, whom I had previously attended; she was now lodging with her Roman Catholic sister in a Roman Catholic house. In a note she said she was very ill, and asked me to call to see her as soon as possible. I went at once. On knocking at the house, which was a corner one, the door was opened by a young man. I asked him if the patient I was looking for was lodged there. "Yes, sir," he replied, "she is upstairs". On entering the hall, I met the landlady looking fierce, for she recognised me; I asked her what room my patient was in, and in a loud and angry voice she said: "She is not in this house at all; she is next door". She opened the door for me to leave. My police guard were standing just outside. I said: "I have been told that she is here, and I believe she is; she has sent for me, and it is my duty to see her, and you must incur serious responsibility if you prevent me." Someone looking out of a side door shouted, "'Tis Dr. Long". In a moment all the Roman Catholics in the house rushed to the hall, and the landlady shouted: "You

will see no one in my house; this is a Catholic house; how dare you come in here at all? Get out of it at once".

It would be difficult to describe the excited state of those young women. At the time I felt very much amused, but it was sad and pitiful. The cook came up, with a kitchen maid and a pair of tongs, to lift me out, lest she should soil her hands with such dirt! Two young women stood above me on the stairs shaking their little fists, and shouting: "You'll not get up here". Several came behind me, and tried to push me into the street, while others continued to shout: "Get out, you old souper".

I attempted to reason quietly, but the landlady would not listen; she seemed terribly frightened, as if her holy house had been invaded by the devil. It was useless to persist. There was no sense of responsibility to appeal to; so throwing all responsibility on the landlady, I bade these young women "good-night", and left with my police escort. Next morning I explained how matters stood to my solicitor, and he sent a note to the landlady, saying I intended calling again, and warning her against again refusing to allow me to see my patient. I called next day in company with my solicitor, but on knocking on the door we were met with a torrent of abuse, and the door was slammed in our faces; we could not force an entrance, and it rested with the patient and her friends to take action against this wonderful landlady.

Some days after this my patient's sister met me in the street and asked me to accompany her to see the invalid. I went with her, but as we approached the house we were recognised, and our friends were ready to give me a warm reception. When the door was open some six or seven young women stood in the hall. They allowed the sister to pass, but not me. They shook their fists, and shouted: "Get off, you devil, you'll not come in here". I stood and smiled at them, and said: "I pity you, you are very foolish". The cook appeared again with a bucket of cinders, which she threw after me, while the landlady threatened to fling the scraper at my head. These people evidently sincerely believed that whatever might happen to the old Protestant lady upstairs was nothing in comparison with the evil they believed they were averting in keeping me out of the house. The old lady sent for another doctor, and died shortly afterwards.

Many good men, Protestants carrying on business in the city, entirely disapproved of the Mission, believing no good could be effected, and that it was the cause of increased religious animosity. Many acquaintances were shy about being seen in my company, and the prevailing impression on all sides was that I was not wanted there at all. I was given clearly to understand that I was not a welcome visitor to any of the city hospitals, and at one hospital Mrs. Long was refused admission to see her maid during visiting hours. The Committee controlling the Queen's Jubilee Nurse also gave special directions that their nurse should not attend any case of which I had charge. These restrictions, as well as others, I felt keenly, as I became isolated professionally. I have, however, learnt that under the circumstances they were justified, in order to safeguard the interests of independent institutions.

On one occasion when I was attending a dear old Christian woman in a Protestant almshouse, I found it most necessary that she should have a nurse to look after her. Our Mission nurse could not do so, and the Jubilee nurse was called in, but before she could attend this Protestant woman, I, her Protestant doctor, was obliged to give up the case entirely!

During 1903 a number of incidents occurred in connection with the car-boycott, of which the following is an instance: One evening, when at tea in a friend's house, a car drove up to the door with a young man, who asked me if I would accompany him to see his mother, who was urgently in need of a doctor. I went out at once with him, but as I proceeded to get on the car beside him, the jarvey said he would not drive if I got on; this young man pleaded with him the urgency of the case, but to no effect. We were both obliged to get off the car, and hurry along on foot. Incidents of this kind were of frequent occurrence, until it became generally known that the jarveys would on no account accept me as a fare.

# THE CORPORATION

SAINT PATRICK'S ADDRESS TO SAINT MUNCHIN

PART EIGHT

by Michael Hogan

"My friend!" he said, 'tis many hundred years  
 Since from yon Isle I plucked the pagan tares,  
 And planted there the Eternal Seed of Truth,  
 And the soul's Bread of everlasting youth.  
 The noble people with a godlike will  
 Received the Word and keep and love it still;  
 For ages by their shepherds guarded well  
 They held it 'gainst the powers of earth and hell;  
 But now, alas! what do mine eyes behold?  
 The people beggared and their country sold  
 By sanctimonious oracles of John Bull,  
 Who only preach to keep their pockets full.  
 Our Irish Church is cankered branch and root  
 By minions manufactured at Maynooth,  
 Who seek her, less for love of great Truth  
 Than for the profit of her earthly fruit.  
 Thousands on thousands every year are paid  
 To have those minions for John's purpose made;  
 In penal days he smashed our priests like delf,  
 But now he's making ones to suit himself.  
 And every bogstick now can send his son  
 To college 'till our Church is overrun  
 With surpliced politicians largely paid  
 By the impoverished dupes on whom they trade.  
 Alas! that household echo, "*Soggart aroon,*"  
 Will die away and be forgotten soon;  
 Already has an awful whisper said  
 "*The Church is huckstered and the land's betrayed!*"  
 O my dear Irish people kind and brave,  
 Who nobly keep the lessons which I gave;  
 And with your blood embalmed the seed I sowed,  
 Braved tyrant-wrath and held the unerring groad.  
 When in dark caves and deserts lurked your priests  
 Outlawed to death and chased like forest beasts;  
 You clung to them thro' peril, pain and death,  
 And sold your lives to shield your fathers' Faith.  
 You spurned the rope, the lash, the sword and shot,  
 The famine pits where shroudless thousands rot,  
 The pitch-caps and the hellish dungeons where  
 You felt all fiendish tortures but despair:  
 The proffered bribery, but you knew it not—  
 And now—your fealty is all forgot.  
 For since that lure "Emancipation" came,  
 Your country's damned to slavery's deeper shame;  
 It only acted as a go-between  
 The solid timber and the rind so green;  
 Caged hawks at liberty it freely set,  
 But left the trusting sparrows in the net;  
 Raised up your priests to palaces from caves,

Made fortunes for their friends and left you slaves.  
 Ay, slaves degraded as the devil can wish—  
 For anglers hook you, and you're sold like fish;  
 Or driven by thousands to a foreign strand,  
 While brutes are fostered in your native land  
 Which you must fly, and think the wild sea-foam  
 More kind than christian savages at home!"  
 My very heart between my feet is pulled,  
 To see my honest faithful people gulled  
 By religious jobbers—but the Lord has marked  
 Those traders in His holy name embarked  
 To traffic in His vineyard—And they'll find  
 The people only slept but were not blind.  
 Ah! such was not the state of things, you know,  
 When you and I were Bishops long ago;  
 We ne'er descended from our sacred station  
 To rule a pandering rascal-corporation;  
 We did not fight like rowdies at an election,  
 Each with a drunken rag-tag-bob-tail faction,  
 To send some bug-bear to the British Senate  
 To help the rest of Ireland's robbers in it.  
 We did not trade on butter, cows and sheep,  
 Feast with the rich and leave the poor to weep;  
 Farm broad acres and charge pounds on pounds  
 For linking man and wife in nuptial bonds;  
 Lodge golden hundreds in the banks each year,  
 Fortunes for nephews and for nieces dear;  
 While, Oh, just Heaven! in caves and garrets lying  
 God's poor are starving, perishing and dying;  
 With none to pity but the Lord who gave  
 His life-blood to the wolves his lambs to save.  
 Oh, if we acted thus, amen! I say,  
 We'd not be chatting here in Heaven to-day!"

## NEW FASHIONS

Behold our local lady Scoobs,  
 Flaunting in fashion's rainbow robes;  
 A country girl picking spuds,  
 Or footing turf, in russet duds;  
 Is far more useful to creation  
 Than all those glittering wisps of fashion.  
 Look at the idle gaudy things,  
 Cabbage in silk, as Shakespeare sings,  
 Fluttering about from street to street,  
 With heads as silly as their feet,  
 One shows the *graceful* Grecian bend,  
 Straining her form from end to end;  
 And seeming to repudiate

The Maker's hand that made her straight,  
 Tightened and stayed she warps along,  
 All fashion right, all nature wrong;  
 'Gainst nature's law she tries to tack,  
 And challenge Heaven to break her back;  
 But heaven, in time, an heir might send.  
 Born with a natural *Grecian bend!!!*  
 And God appoint her a right place  
 As mother of a crooked race.  
 Another fashion-loving nymph  
 Shows off the Alexandrian limp;  
 Because an English Prince's wife  
 By skating has got lame for life;  
 Some Molly Scoobs of Limerick fame,  
 Deem it a glory to walk lame,  
 Like the dear princess whose dear shin  
 Was formed so delicate and thin  
 It collapsed under its royal load—  
 Disporting on an icy road—  
 With a slight fracture of the bone;  
 And so the limping art has grown.  
 To make the waddling fashion suit,  
 They wear a low and high heeled boot;

Exactly to preponderate,  
 And give one leg a cripple's gait  
 Isn't it enough to rouse and whet  
 God's wrath and make his hand forget  
 The moulding of the shapely forms  
 Of such artistic limping worms.  
 Discretion eyes them with disgust,  
 And Modesty strews her head with dust,  
 To see her shameless votaries aim  
 At things which Heaven and Nature shame.  
 Who knows but, like the *Grecian Bend*,  
 The Lord may in his justice send  
 A brood of cripples ready-made  
 To every lame-leg-aping jade.  
 Heaven help the thousands' means and lives  
 That fate has marked for such *sweet* wives  
 They'll find, like Martin Carroll, that love  
 Is more a raven than a dove!  
 In wedlock what's those butterflies' use?  
 Just only, merely to produce—  
 After a few sick honeymoons—  
 A brainless progeny of poltroons.

---

## PAISLEY'S PUSH

---

**If the Haughey-Thatcher summit and the subsequent Anglo-Irish talks have all the significance the nationalists say, then Paisley's military threat against the Republic is entirely reasonable. The whole nationalist establishment has been saying that the Anglo-Irish talks amount to Britain going over the heads of the Unionists and handing over control of the North to Dublin (nationalism has always pretended that this is possible to do, so it can't complain if Paisley believes it). And if Britain is granting victory to the Provos then clearly, unionists have no choice but to resort to military force.**

The threat of violence always plays a part in politics. One of the reasons the present war escalated so fast in the early 'seventies is that the wise men declared the '**Protestant backlash**' to be a myth - we could just keep up the political pressure as the Provos kept up the bombing, and the Prods would lie down under whatever was coming to them. The bombing of Dublin in 1974 had the effect of making unionism a force to be reckoned with. Even now, Haughey and others must tread warily in their Republican crusading for fear of further bombs. There are limits on how far any Southern government dare go in trying to overcome unionist resistance to united Ireland schemes.

The difference with Paisley's army is that it has more to do with the face-saving of Big Ian than the defence of the union. Over the last 12 months Paisley has done more to damage the union than any other factor in Northern Ireland. He made the Atkins talk possible to no other purpose but to put himself in the limelight for several months. It was obvious from the start that '**the Irish dimension**' and power-sharing (i.e. a back-door Irish dimension) cannot be agreed on by the two sides in Northern Ireland. There is no basis for devolution or the return of Stormont. Nor are there any reasons to wish for devolution - it should now be plain that it is through integration of Northern Ireland into mainstream British politics that the sectarian divide will be broken.

The nationalists have correctly seen Paisley as unionism's Achilles heel - he has done more than anyone else to make

Northern Ireland as un-British as possible. He has disrupted the integration trend that set in towards the end of the last Labour administration. For over a year now there has been a devious nationalist pro-Paisley campaign. Paisley has been built up as '**cock of the North**' and a '**tough Irish politician**' in contrast to the '**blundering**' Official unionists who would have no truck with the anti-integrationist Atkins talks. And as ever, the '**political commentators**' didn't get a bit embarrassed when the Atkins talks came to nothing, thus vindicating the Official Unionists' boycott and making Paisley look ridiculous.

It would be no harm now to see Paisley smashed in the forthcoming local elections, and Paisley no doubt senses a mood to that effect, among Ulster Protestants. Having jeopardised the union for a year now, he wishes to pose as Ulster's only stalwart defender. He is trying to create a fear of imminent Republican gain in Northern Ireland, which is the necessary precondition of his own political existence. He is telling tales of army collusion in the Stronge killings that are reminiscent of Republican fantasies about the SAS. He is pulling his paramilitary escapade out of his hat with a view to regaining his lost credibility.

There was a time when Paisley was necessary to Northern Ireland - if he had been destroyed this would have been taken as a sign of Protestant weakness and a reason to step up nationalist pressure. But now Ulster would be better off without Paisley. Southern Ireland has grown sick of the North - if there is an election this year it will not be fought on how far Haughey has got with his '**primary objective**' in politics, nor will Southern electors trouble as to whether or not there are name-tags on clothes in H-Block. If Thatcher tries to give anything away to Haughey, then Ulster will simply not put up with it. (and whose going to try to make the, Southern workers?) Carson in his day met a real threat with real, effective politics. **But the problem Paisley has to face is that while unionists won't hesitate to use physical force if that is the last option, there is nothing that the Anglo-Irish talks can push on Northern Ireland against its will, and at this stage, no thanks to Paisley either.**

# SOUTH AFRICA

If, as claimed by Mrs. Bernadette McAlliskey, the H-Block campaign split public opinion in the South in two, then the campaign against the visit to South Africa by the Irish rugby team has most certainly proved a unique healing force.

This time, the country is almost unanimous in their condemnation of the tour, and bar the GAA which has its own apartheid problems, there is hardly an organisation in the country which hasn't commented on the issue.

One writer to the *Irish Press*, nearly went so far as to claim that the IRFY were an anti-Roman Catholic body, who had ever 'frowned' on the Catholic people of Ireland.

Even Provisional Sinn Fein have got into the act, appealing in the name of Kevin Barry and Cathal Brugha (two ex-rugby players), for the cancellation of the tour.

The Republican position in relation to South Africa is interesting to say the least. More than a few racist skeletons rattle the Sinn Fein cupboard. After all, the Vervoerds, the "Blackie" Swarts and the Bothas are the true sons of those "brave and courageous Boers" that Connolly and Griffith paid such high tribute to in the South African war.

Even nationalist stalwarts like Major McBride and Colonel Lynch saw active service in the Boer cause.

Griffith's feelings on the question of self-determination for the black man, in his famous statement on John Mitchell's role in the American Civil War, would ensure him a place of warmth in the heart of any Afrikaner.

Indeed, the history of modern South Africa is full of parallels with Southern Ireland the role of the Dutch Reformed Church; Affican culture and language; Afrikaaner nationalism, and even its small landowner mentality and early anti-big capitalist outlook:

**It is ordained that we, insignificant as we are, should be the first among the people to begin the struggle against the new world tyranny of capitalism''.**

**('A Century of Wrong', General Smuts.)**

Anyone reading the Manifesto issued by the rebel Afrikaaner Generals in 1914, could be forgiven in mistaking it for a forerunner of what was to occur elsewhere just eighteen months later:

**Declarations of Independence and Establishment of Independence and Independence and Establishment of Provisional Government by Rebels, October, 1914. Proclamation regarding the restoration of the South African Republic. 'To the people of South Africa: The day of liberation has dawned, the Boer people of South Africa has already risen, and has begun the War of Independence against the Undesired and Enforced British Dominion. The German Government, whose triumph is already assured, has as the first great power, granted the South African Republic the right of existence.'**

So the Sinn Feiners were not the first to realise that Britain's difficulty was their opportunity.

When attempting to raise the self-righteous hackles of their supporters and fellow travellers, the Left forever use South Africa as an example of how bad things are in Northern Ireland.

But if a person were to gauge their opinion of South Africa on the basis of what the Left has told them about N.I. you'd be in a right old mess.

Many a snigger is made in reference to the fact that its the white working class who prevent the development of the democratic rights of the non-European people, yet, some of the greatest sacrifices made in the struggle for equal rights has been made by South African white workers. Some even giving their lives in that cause. The workers of South Africa have had as many struggles and made as many sacrifices as the working class in any part of the world.

In the years 1884 to 1922, major strikes took place in the mines, never without loss of life. In 1922 a strike on the Witwatersrand (The Rand) was the greatest struggle in magnitude and importance in the history of South African

labour.

The workers organised themselves into commando groups and met force with force. For nearly a week civil war raged. British and Afrikaaner workers fought side by side. Smuts was forced to bring in tens of thousands of troops, artillery and aircraft. The workers, many of them veterans of WW, gave as much as they got and inflicted several blows on the government forces. Hopelessly outnumbered, their resistance was crushed. A reign of terror followed.

Eighteen workers were sentenced to death - four were executed. Their best leaders were killed in that action or imprisoned or black-listed; some were deported.

True; many of the workers would have been fighting to preserve their "privileged position over the natives", but surely it's up to those on the left who claim to understand and lead the working class to analyse the state of things on the South African goldfields in the 1920s and for a long time afterwards.

The mine bosses were using native labour to force down the wages and break the conditions of all workers. 60,000 Chinese were brought in to work in the mines during this period as well. On top of that, the Afrikaaner started to drift from the land and his small uneconomic holdings and seek work in the mines. These workers had absolutely no trade union background at all and were often playing the role of strike-breakers themselves.

It is ironic that in two other colonies, the USA and Australia, the first lines of the battle in the class war were fought in the mines. Anti-Chinese feeling amongst trade unionists on the Australian fields was equally as hostile as anything which existed in South Africa.

Since 1950, many socialists and those with a commitment to working class development in South Africa have believed that new economic and industrial development would compel the uplifting of the non-European peoples; the abolition of the economic colour bar; and much greater efficiency. It was believed also that this expansion and increase in the consumer power of the 17 million non-Europeans would in itself create a substantial local market.

They were correct about one thing: the enormous growth and expansion of South Africa. Indeed, one of the highest and most consistent growth rates in the post war Western World. But there was to be no political uplifting of the non-Europeans and the repression continues.

No doubt history and social development is on the side of change and this will occur sooner or later.

Harry Oppenheimer and his Anglo-American Corporation, with other Liberals have been advocating change and the loosening of repressive legislation. Recently P.W. Botha, the Prime Minister, has been tinkering with the more petty aspects of apartheid. But Black nationalism is no longer interested in reform - it's interested in power. And why not? If the forces of history are unanimously on the side of change - as in Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia.

Writing in 1952, the former Communist Party of South Africa and the multi-racial Garment Workers' Union of South Africa leader, Solly Sachs, said:

**It seems that we have reached a stage in human history when only revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces can act effectively while the democratic forces can content themselves with pious resolutions and denunciations. There is still time however - not much time - for the democratic forces to prove that democracy is not dead yet .**

That was nearly 30 years ago and who now could deny that time has indeed run out and revolution and counter-revolution will decide.

**(Who) must rise or fall,  
(Who) must rule and win,  
Or serve and forfeit,  
Suffer or triumph,  
Be Anvil or be Hammer.**

(Reprinted from "Comment").